

BlueDevil II

88th Regional Support Command

July 2001 Vol. VI, No. 2

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CG's Corner

Maj. Gen. John M. O'Connell



In July, I'll be changing command of the 88th Regional Support Command with Brig. Gen. Michael Beasley. My four years of command have gone by quickly.

I've personally emphasized spending as much time in the field with soldiers during their training weekends and annual training exercises as possible. And as your commander, I have been continually impressed and am exceptionally proud of the professionalism, commitment, and dedication to duty of our RSC soldiers. Commanders are successful only because of the soldiers they lead.

When I first assumed command of the 88th RSC in 1997, we were just entering the final stages of transitioning from a much smaller Army Reserve Command to a Regional

Support Command. The expansion, in terms of numbers of soldiers, units, equipment, missions, and geographical locations, was tremendous. It required coordination, cooperation, and control. I felt confident that we had the right people in the right positions to make it all work. And we did.

Today, the 88th RSC is one of the best in the U.S. Army Reserve Command.

With more than 35,000 soldiers serving in 261 units located in six Upper Midwest states, we have an annual economic impact of almost half a billion dollars! That alone is impressive. But so is our real-world mission – helping to keep our nation safe and our world at peace. With increased mobilizations, all of us are called upon to do more. Time after time, 88th RSC soldiers have demonstrated that they are trained, prepared, and ready to take on whatever mission is given them at home or abroad.

I am proud to have served as your commander. I will regard my time in service with the 88th as some of the most personally and professionally fulfilling days of my military career. I am certain you will continue to serve the new commanding general, BG Michael Beasley, with the same loyalty and respect I have been given.

My best wishes for you as you continue to serve this command and our nation.

- Blue Devils!

Commanders are successful only because of the soldiers they lead.



Command Sgt. Maj. John Werner

Safety first. It's as simple as that. As Reservists in the 21st Century, we're increasingly being called upon to

work side-by-side with active-duty units. This has meant a greater focus on realistic, tough training. But it also means a greater focus on safety. Nothing we do during drill, AT, or even at home, warrants an unsafe act. Nothing.

Of course, as soldiers, our ultimate mission is to fight and win in war and that means taking risks. However, while we train to decrease that risk, we also must consciously train safely. For one thing, being safe increases our warfighting capability. About 80 per-

cent of our accidents, both in peacetime and in combat, involve human error. That percentage affects our ability to accomplish the mission. Accomplishing the mission falls on the shoulders on the Noncommissioned officer. If you have soldiers injured because of unsafe acts your ability to complete the mission decreases, and if the mission fails who's fault is it? Yours. It's as simple as that.

But it's more than just increasing our warfighting ability. I don't want any soldier injured or killed because of an unsafe act, because that not only affects the soldier, but the soldier's family and friends as well. As NCOs, you need to think about the personal ramifications of unsafe acts. It's a lot to ask for, but that's why you are NCOs, and I expect no less.

From the Top

It's not hard to have a safe work environment. It's as simple as assessing the risk potential and taking precautions. If it's hot outside, make sure your soldiers have plenty of water and take breaks. If a soldier has tools and a creeper laying about the floor at the motor pool, have him pick them up. If you are unloading heavy equipment, don't let one soldier lift an object just because he says he can; have two soldiers lift it. If you see a soldier conducting a PMCS without the proper manual because he says he knows the steps, have him get the manual and do the PMCS "by the book." Do such measures take time? Of course, but slow and steady wins the race. Short cuts don't. It's as simple as that.

Take the point!



Blue Devil II

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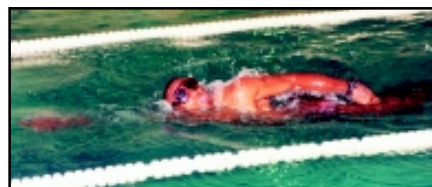
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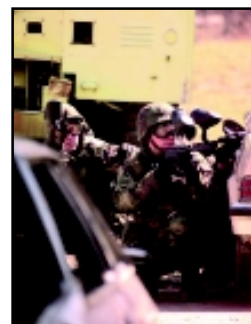


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On the cover

88th Regional Support Command soldiers take cover in "Doom City" during Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) Training at Fort Knox. See the story on page 13.

Photo by Spc Chris Putman, 367th MPAD, Whitehall, Ohio



On the back

88th Regional Support Command soldiers control a prisoner during Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) Training at Fort Knox. See the story on page 13.

Photo by Spc Chris Putman, 367th MPAD, Whitehall, Ohio



From the editor

The *Blue Devil II* is for soldiers, DA civilians and family members. We invite reader's views.

Please stay fewer than 150 words and include your name, rank and address. Anonymous letters will generally not be used. We may condense your views because of space. We can't publish or answer every one, but we'll use representative views. Write to: Letters, *Blue Devil II*, 506 Roeder Circle, Fort Snelling, MN 55111-4009, or email: **88th.PAO Office@usarc-emh2.army.mil**

Funeral details

Recently the Reserve components have been assigned the honorable task of providing funeral details. Having had the honor to be on these details I have often been asked why we perform the solemn service and fold the flag the way we do. This question has more than once caught me off guard without a ready response. I'm sure that there is a rich historical tradition and logical justification in folding the flag as we do. But that is not the answer that the bereaved are seeking. They want an emotional justification. Something to ease them through the often-painful loss of a husband, a father (or mother), or an old army buddy. No answer eases the loss of a loved one.

Several years ago, I was asked to speak to a group of elementary school kids about what it meant to be a veteran as part of their schools veterans day required education (in Idaho). As the school counselor I called a few friends, one from each war; WWII through Desert Storm, and asked them to speak for a few minutes on the subject of what it meant to them to be a veteran. The faculty was fear-

ful that we might tell some war stories, but each one spoke about their pride in serving, the sacrifices of personal comforts, and of loss. Each of them was in the uniform of their era. Surprisingly, all the children were reverent and quiet during the 45-minute all-school assembly.

As I concluded the assembly, a teacher asked me what it meant to me. I thought that I had managed to avoid speaking to the students, but I was caught and couldn't get out of it. Not that I was embarrassed, but I have never seen combat as my guest speaker had. My duty assignments have always had me as a training instructor during our nation's conflicts. I said a quick prayer for inspiration and then told the children of why the flag means so much to veterans.

I remember that day and what I said. Now at funeral details I give the same response. I print the little speech on quality paper, fold it neatly and place it into the hands of the bereaved.

I thought you might want to share it with the BlueDevil soldiers. Some day they too might be asked to explain why we do what we do at a funeral for a veteran.

A SOLDIER'S JOB

A soldier's job is to keep the stars of our country's flag shining, no matter where the President or Congress might decide to have them shine.

Serving in troubled spots around the world, Along fire lines in the West, Behind the destructive paths of hurricanes, The soldier doesn't choose where or even how to serve.

When a soldier dies and the flag is draped upon his coffin the Stars are placed over his head so that with his spiritual eyes he can see that the Stars are still shining.

The last thing that he sees before being lowered into the ground is the flag on his coffin, and that

the Stars still shine.

When the honor guard folds that flag, it is folded so that the Stars will always shine.

And when the guns fire the twenty-one shots and the mournful bugle sounds, it is an announcement to the angels that a protector of the Stars is coming home.

Wayne Evans
MAJ.TC.USAR

Admin comes through

I'm sending you a letter that I received from Maj. Russ Ty (Retired USAR) for returning his military personnel and finance records to him.

Scott AFB billeting office called me back in February to ask for assistance with what appeared to be some "important documents" left at the Scott Inn. I went by on my lunch and found 4 MPRJ's with original LES's, orders, and original awards/certificates.

I contacted Regional Support Team 5 at AR-PERSCOM and got his phone number. After talking with Russ Ty aka James Charles Ostrander, I found he left the records at the Scott Inn OVER 9 YEARS ago!!!

Thought they were lost forever and has been trying to get copies of replacement documents. Scott Inn placed the records in their storage room in the hope that someone would call back for them. While cleaning out the storage room they did not want to destroy them so they contacted me as word is out that a Army Reserve Unit is on base.

I received a Level II TRANSCOM award after I gave USAR Element Commander (Col. Janovicz) his copy of the letter.

Maybe a story such as this will make SFC Phillip Stone (editorial letter in the May 2001 issue) see admin support personnel in a different light.
DIANE COLE PHIPPS, JTRU Army Element Unit Administrator

Train as you fight

WMD equipment gives 472nd soldiers realistic training

**Master Sgt. Robert F. Cargie,
350th MPAD, Indianapolis, Ind.**

In back of a U.S. Army Reserve building on the south side of Chicago, soldiers from the 472nd Chemical Battalion respond to incoming casualties; casualties of war in the middle of the third largest city in America. Drivers on a nearby highway slow and stare as they pass the startling scene. There is an obvious incongruity.

"Gas!" was called moments before, causing the soldiers to don their gas masks. Identities are lost in the hoods of the masks, but the knowledge gained through constant training is apparent. The action is instinctive.

As part of an extensive ambulatory and non-ambulatory patient decontamination exercise "Dragon Soldiers" face the reality of blood and evisceration. Pvt.2 Lisa Becker, 18, of Crete, Ill., is on hand to help remove the boots and gloves of the afflicted soldiers.

"I welcome the challenge of training like this," Becker said. "When you see someone lying unconscious with bloody hands you realize what could happen. It becomes real."

The "train as you fight" mentality is strongly in place. The soldiers have setup a battlefield encampment that sends injured soldiers through a five-step process. The process includes medical triage, removing contaminated clothing and decontaminating the soldier who was a victim of a nuclear, biological or chemical attack.

Spec. Anthony Kraus, 20, of the 472nd Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment became a casualty. With theater blood applied and a prosthetic that imitates a disembowelment wrapped around his midsection, a second look is required to see that the injury isn't real. Playing a casualty is a far cry from his usual role of working in the supply section.

"I'm glad to be part of this," said Kraus. "It helps my unit prepare and lets them know what it takes to work faster. And besides, I was told this blood washes out easily."

With worldwide concern growing about Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), the battalion recently received new equipment that addresses

this threat. Soldiers trained on that equipment as part of the weekend exercise.

Doctrine is being developed that includes U.S. Army Reserve units in a scenario where civilians are targets of WMD. The newly arrived equipment is employed in those scenarios. The equipment includes a rapidly deployable shelter that will act as a mobile field decontamination station. The shelter can be operational in a very short time.

Capt. Meredith Kerr-Pagor, 34, an operations officer with the battalion, said units like the 372nd and the 379th Chemical Companies are beginning to train based on the new doctrine. "We don't wish for anything of the kind to happen – in fact we pray it never does – but if it does occur we will be ready to assist," Kerr-Pagor said.

According to Kerr-Pagor, realistic and gruesome training in scenarios that include civilians will hone the skills of the battalion soldiers. She said it would act as a deterrent for those who may consider exacting some form of punishment on citizens of the United States by using weapons of mass destruction.

Capt. James Lincoln, commanding officer of the 379th Chemical Co., summed up the training effort. "We are trying to prepare our soldiers. We are preparing them for a situation that might require them to work in their own backyard." ♦



A 472nd Chemical Battalion soldier treats the wounded while under a "chemical attack."

Why black berets?

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack A. Tilley speaks out

I returned last week from a visit to several CONUS installations, and I was reminded again of how little many soldiers appear to know about our transition to the black beret.

Sometimes, I think I'm alone in talking about this. I would ask that each of you read this, pass it along to as many fellow leaders as possible and then get out and start talking about the beret and what's right for the Army.

In recent months, it has become increasingly apparent that opinions on the beret are nearly as numerous as the myths and misconceptions surrounding both the beret's history and our reasons for switching to it.

I've made it a point to talk about the beret with nearly every group of soldiers I've spoken with in my travels. Typically, I've asked for a show of hands from people who think the black beret is a bad idea. As a rule, about 20-30 percent of the soldiers raise their hands.

Then, nearly every group has shared some good-natured laughs with me as we take a look at what soldiers *really* know about the topic.

"What kind of units wore the black beret from 1973-1979," I begin asking the soldiers who raised their hands.

"What was the first unit in the Army authorized to wear black berets?"

"True or false — Rangers wore berets in World War II?"

"True or false - soldiers graduating from Ranger School are awarded a Ranger tab and a black beret?"

"What is the only course in the Army where soldiers are awarded

berets upon graduation?"

"How many years has the Army talked about putting every soldier in a black beret?"

I think it safe to say that less than 20 percent of the soldiers who raised their hands can answer even one of these questions.

Beginning as early as 1924, I tell these groups, armor units in the British Army began wearing black berets for a few very simple reasons. For one thing, the color hid the grease spots. Also, the beret allowed tank crewmen to comfortably wear radio headsets and push their faces against the tank's telescopic sights.

Although historians say a few Ranger units unofficially wore black berets during the early 1950s and again during the Vietnam War, the Center of Military History can find no photos or documentation indicating World

Further, more than a few eyebrows go up when I explain to soldiers that armor and cavalry units throughout the Army were authorized black berets from 1973-1979.

A few months back, one old cavalryman even told me that when Chief of Staff Gen. Bernard Rogers decided in 1979 that only special operations and airborne units would be authorized berets, tankers in his unit objected to the decision and burned "their" black berets in protest.

It is also interesting to note how many soldiers believe that Ranger and Airborne School graduates receive either black or maroon berets upon completing their respective courses. Further, very few soldiers realize that Special Forces Qualification Course graduates are the only troops in the Army awarded a beret and tab when they complete their school.

Thus far in talking to literally thousands of soldiers about the black beret, only one person - a sergeant at Fort Gordon, Ga. - knew

that the Army's leadership had considered transitioning the entire force to black berets for more than a dozen years. Each time, the decision was deferred because of other priorities.

During his first year as Chief of Staff, Gen. Eric Shinseki concentrated on building up momentum for our ongoing transformation. Only in his second year as chief did he decide the time was right for us to wear black berets.

At the end of my beret quiz, I ask soldiers to tell me what they know about the Army and our ongoing transformation. I'm proud to say most show a better grasp of transformation than

"True or false - soldiers graduating from Ranger School are awarded a Ranger tab and a black beret?"

War II Rangers were ever authorized to wear berets of any color.

The headgear did not become an official part of the Ranger uniform for another 25 years. In 1975, the Army authorized two newly formed ranger battalions to wear black berets - one year after both armor and cavalry units around the Army began wearing black berets

Many soldiers say, "oh yeah," when I remind them that our Opposing Force units at the National Training Center, Joint Readiness Training Center and Combat Maneuver Training Center have worn black berets for years.

of the history of the black beret.

As I explain it, Gen. Shinseki's intent with transformation is to prepare the Army for the diverse missions our country is now asking us to perform.

Prior to Desert Storm, Saddam Hussein overran Kuwait in a matter of days and stopped his forces at the border just north of oil-rich eastern Saudi Arabia. Mysteriously, he then sat and watched for six months as we reinforced our rapid deploying airborne units. In the end, the mass of our assembled combat power allowed us to achieve a quick, decisive victory.

For the foreseeable future, there will remain in the world a number of countries and leaders who will think it wise to challenge the United States, our interests and our allies. And, I tell soldiers, I think it's a sure bet that most of these folks watch CNN.

Nobody will ever know for certain why Saddam stopped when he had

It may be something of oversimplification, but I tell soldiers that - in the end - transformation will result in heavy units that are more deployable and agile and light units that are more lethal and survivable. The result will be warfighting formations that can deploy about as fast as today's light units but pack a lot more firepower and mobility.

So, as we move toward that goal, I ask groups to name the one uniform item that could logically symbolize that transformation . . . one item that has, over the years, been associated with both heavy armor units as well as the best light infantry unit in the world.

Bingo . . . the light starts to come on as they connect the intent and importance of transformation with the diverse and historic heritage of the black beret.

Change is never easy, I tell soldiers, and I understand that. It's especially

or two away.

These mistakes have been costly - they have been paid for in the lives of our soldiers as we have often lost early battles in a number of wars. It is a testament to the greatness of our country and our military that we learned quickly in these conflicts and adjusted our equipment, training and tactics and achieved victory in the end.

But, it makes sense to me to begin changing with the world and design formations that are better suited for future conflicts. Not only could this make the difference in these yet-to-be battles, but it might let us avoid them entirely as future enemies gauge our capabilities and decide their best course of action is to avoid a fight with us at all costs.

The last question I typically ask soldiers is, "how many of you have ever celebrated the Army's birthday?" Sadly, I would tell you that maybe 25 percent of them indicate that they have.

That, I tell them, is about to change. In the future, we're going to take pride in the Army's heritage to the point that if there's two soldiers in a fighting position on June 14, I expect them to put a match in a piece of MRE pound cake, blow it out and then sing "Happy Birthday" to the Army.

In recent years, the Army has been the silent man of the Defense Department as we have quietly gone about doing our nation's business without calling a lot of attention to ourselves and our accomplishments. There's something to be said for modesty, but I tell our soldiers we deserve to flex occasionally and tell people who we are, where we've been and where we're going.

I would hope that these thoughts would add a bit to soldiers' understanding of both the Army's transformation and the change to the black beret.

Thank you for listening and have a great Army day.

SMA Jack L. Tilley

Photo by Rob Shuette, Fort McCoy PAO



our forces outgunned and outnumbered. Far more certain is the fact that the next dictator to challenge us won't repeat Saddam's mistakes. When future foes mobilize their forces, they will likely move quickly while hoping they can achieve their objectives before we can deploy our forces.

To be ready for that kind of show-down and to better prepare us for missions like those in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo, Gen. Shinseki is transforming the Army into a force that's more agile, deployable and lethal.

difficult in an organization as large and grounded in history and tradition as the Army. But, I also understand that we must change if we are to be ready for the challenges that await us in this new century.

I tell people that, for the most part, our military has done a poor job of envisioning and preparing for the next war. Typically, we have trained and equipped our military based on what was true in the last war while failing to see the coming of a different conflict that was often less than a decade



A soldier from the 212th Quartermaster Company packs berets for shipping.

Photo by Rob Schuette, Fort McCoy PAO

The high-profile beret distribution mission gave the **212th Quartermaster Company** many ... **opportunities for flexibility**

By Spec. Melanie McPherson, 364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn.

When the 212th Quartermaster Company, Arden Hills, Minn., received the mission to report to Fort McCoy, Wis., to ship black berets to all reserve Army Reserve units West of the Mississippi, they were caught off guard.

“When I was first notified of this mission I was angry,” said 1st Sgt. Richard J. Gibson, 212th QM. Co. “What came to mind was that this task was to take place in April when many of the younger soldiers are in college, and they wouldn’t be here for this mission. It didn’t take long to realize that we’ll make this work. After all it’s part of the Army to be flexible. It’s turned into a very positive thing.”

The flexibility of the Army was further tested with the subsequent recall of all berets shipped (the 212th, augmented with soldiers from the 215th QM. Co., Jeffersonville, Ind., had virtually completed the mission before the recall was ordered). But even with the recall, the mission was still a positive thing.

“This mission forced the members of the 212th to come together as an efficient unit to pull off this high priority mission, and to prevail with a small percentage of error or discrepancy between what was shipped out and what was received,” said 1st Lt. John R. Fawcett, 212th commander. “Our sol-

diers are really very good at checking and verifying.”

“This is a good mission to show off the capability of the 212th,” said Pvt. Jeff E. Stadtherr. “We’ve done missions of this magnitude before, but this is definitely the

“The Army realizes that we have the ability to get this done. It’s a very big honor.”

highest profile mission we've done. Morale is really good. People are enjoying having work with set deadlines. This is a good wartime mission for us, in that it really forces the soldiers to keep focused. The Army realizes that we have the ability to get this done. It's a very big honor."

The mission went smoothly, although a few human errors surfaced in shipments received from the manufacturers. Some shipments arrived with inaccurate counts and/or sizes, which affected the inventory.

"As with any mission, when you're starting out you're going to have problems," said Sgt. 1st Class Sandi K. Arnold, the Material Control Supervisor and Training NCO for the 212th. "We have adapted and overcome these minor obstacles. The 212th is very particular when handling each beret to ensure it has been checked three times for accuracy of count and size. This is a good group of people and they are always extremely motivated to do their job. We're glad we have this mission."

"I couldn't be prouder of these kids," said Gibson. "Between the 212th, and the soldiers from the 215th that augmented us, we were getting it done. If we'd gotten the rest of the berets, we would have been finished." As it was, the 212th distributed all 77,348 berets that were available to ship within the first 15 days they were there.

The 212th paved some new ground too. "We created some computer programs (at Fort McCoy) for shipment tracking and reporting, and forwarded them up to U.S. Army Reserve Command for use on future missions," Gibson said.

Although the members of 212th weren't allowed to try a black beret on, they seemed to welcome the uniform change. "I've noticed that a lot of my young soldiers who are coming in are really excited about it," said Fawcett.

"The uniform change to the black beret rather than the garrison cap shows how the Army is changing with the times," said Pvt. Kendall A. Martin, North Branch, Minn. "Soldiers in training will wear the garrison cap with the Class A uniform until they have graduated from basic training. In turn, the black beret becomes a symbol of basic training completion and shows commitment."

"I think the black beret will look nicer in the Class A uniforms instead of the 'pickle cap," added Stadtherr.

July 2001

88th beret information

The 88th Regional Support Command should begin receiving black berets in October. Berets will be distributed through normal distribution channels.

When beret distribution is complete, the 88th RSC will designate a date to don the beret. Until then the battle dress uniform (BDU) cap, saucer cap and garrison cap remain the garrison headgear.

Soldiers:

- * Reporting to the 88th RSC on permanent assignment from units where the beret is already being worn will store their berets until all soldiers in theater begin wearing them.

- * Visiting the 88th RSC on temporary duty (TDY) will wear the uniform prescribed by their parent unit.

- * Departing the 88th RSC for a unit already wearing the beret will be issued a beret on arrival at the unit.

All in all, it was mission success for the 212th. The berets had to be out in time for reservists to have them worn in properly for the donning ceremony June 14th, and they were. Even with the recall, the opportunity to show off what the Army Reserve can do, and to complete a wartime mission above standard, made it all worthwhile.

"From the time we got the notice on Jan. 23 until we completed the mission, the 212th and 215th did an outstanding job," Gibson said. "The training we got in doing the mission was outstanding all the way through. I feel very good about it, and I think our soldiers do too." ♣

Photo by Rob Shuette, Fort McCoy PAO



A soldier from the 212th Quartermaster Company moves boxes of berets during the shipping process.

Hard work

During a two-week stint the 7212th Medical Support Unit (Installation) provided medical, dental and veterinary services to over 5,600 Blue Fields, Nicaragua, residents

When the 7212th Medical Support Unit (Installation) received its mission for this year's Annual Training, they knew they had their work cut out for them. The unit, based out of Rochester, Minn., spent the last two weeks of May in Bluefields, Nicaragua, providing a variety of medical services for its citizens.

The 35 members of the 7212th had their hands full. Over 5,600 people were seen and treated, as well as over 1,500 cats, dogs, cows, pigs, horses and chickens. "We weren't going to turn anyone away," said Maj. Bob Nicosia, officer in charge of patient flow and administration. "We were kept busy, but we got a lot of support from the host nation."

Nicosia said the assistance given by nursing students and teachers from a local school eased language problems and helped him keep the flow of patients moving. About 25-50 people were registered and processed at a time and given quick check-ups. Problems were identified and the appropriate remedies applied. Ointments were given for skin problems, 600 teeth were pulled, and 1,500 pairs of glasses (donated by the Lions Club) were distributed, among other services.

"The patients were then given a prevention class," said Nicosia. "We taught them about boiling water, brushing their teeth and other tips to keep them healthy." A lot of work for the soldiers, but Nicosia said it was worth it. "Personally, it was a wonderful experience," he said.



Photo by Capt. William Hays

Spec. Henry Welch, examines a patient while on annual training in Blue Field, Nicaragua, as Lt. Col. Frank Marcantonio looks on.

Nicosia isn't alone. "It was excellent," said Lt. Col. John Maurer, former commander of the 7212th. "We surpassed every expectation we laid out for this mission because we had good people with a good work ethic."

"You start sending people to Fort McCoy, or Camp Atterbury, or Camp Ripley every year to stand around and man a treatment facility," said Maurer, "they won't stay in."

Maurer, who retired recently after 30 years in the military, said annual training's like this are great tools for retention. "It's meaningful, intense training; young people today need to be challenged," he said. "You start sending people to Fort McCoy, or Camp Atterbury, or Camp Ripley

every year to stand around and man a treatment facility, they won't stay in."

But working in a country like Nicaragua isn't all about training, it's also a chance to do good and make a difference, said Maurer. "It is extremely important to the people down there because they don't have access to level one medical care without having to pay for it. With an average income of \$400 a year, they just can't afford to go to the doctor unless it's an emergency."

In addition to the medical services, soldiers of the 7212th also handed out over 3,500 pair of shoes and donated two computers and school supplies to the local university and K-12 school where they had their treatment centers set up, said Maurer.

This is the first time the unit has deployed to Nicaragua. Last year, it trained in Costa Rica, performing the same mission. Maurer said it was a challenge working in the austere, dangerous environment of Nicaragua, adding that it was hotter than a certain nether region. After two weeks of the muggy heat, though, Maurer said the Minnesota weather was a welcome relief.

"It was nice to feel a cool breeze again," he said. ♦

(Right) The 7212th Medical Support Unit (Installation) doctors saw this patient who is suffering from hydrocephalus. Hydrocephalus is a condition where cerebrospinal fluid is unable to drain into the spinal column and be absorbed by the body. The brain continues to produce the fluid, resulting in the swelling pictured. This patient, according to Capt. William Hays, probably died within days of the 7212th leaving – the case was too advanced to be treated. The unit also saw a case of hydrocephalus that they were able to catch at an earlier stage, and were able to advise appropriate medical care, saving the child's life. Hays said that a child suffering from this disease in a developed country would never advance to this stage – the disease occurs in about one out of 1,000 births. The 7212th was able to provide appropriate guidance to the population seen, to help them identify this disease sooner, so the disease would not advance to this stage in the future.



Photo by Capt. William Hays

Photo by Capt. William Hays



Capt. William Hays examines an infant patient as the mother looks on.



Pay the troops

By Master Sgt. Dave Johnson,
367th MPAD, Whitehall, Ohio

At a time when military demands are plenty, the demand of “Show me the money” is heard on a daily basis.

To that end, finance specialists are becoming more adept at ensuring pay and debit issues are handled in a timely manner.

“Soldiers and pay administrators have the tools available to them to track and correct most pay issues,” said Sgt. 1st Class Alan Lanners, finance noncommissioned officer for the Soldier Support Center at the 88th Regional Support Command based at Fort Snelling, Minn.

Lanners, and other instructors from the 88th RSC and the reserve component pay support office at Fort McCoy, Wis., train groups of Army Reserve pay administrators during workshops at the conference center located on Fort McCoy, throughout the year.

“I teach unit pay administrators skills to solve problems,” Lanners said. “When soldiers use their pay chain of command, most issues are resolved quickly.”

There are numerous tools available to assist soldiers and pay administrators with pay, from 1-800-PAY-ARMY for soldiers, to the intranet, which is available to the full-time staff members, Lanners said.

“If an issue can’t be resolved in the immediate pay chain of command, we’re the last stop at the 88th RSC’s Soldier Support Center (1-800-THE-ARMY, ext. HELP), and we’ll certainly jump in head first to help soldiers,” he said.

Computer-age tools are available,

but soldiers should use the basics to get started, said Ed Kammer, pay administrator for the 320th AG Postal Company, in Cincinnati. “We had fingers before we had forks.”

Kammer used the old adage to emphasize that soldiers should use basic tools available to them – primarily their leave and earning statement, or LES, to track many pay issues.

According to Tammy Madden, finance specialist at the soldier support center at the 88th RSC, soldiers should review their LES each month.

Announcements are often made on the LES when mass dissemination of information is required. For example, when tuition assistance and insurance updates change for the soldiers, the LES is the best tool, Madden said. LESs are the soldier’s history and are used to resolve issues, should any arise.

“Soldiers need to keep the unit in-

tion for their service, but they must also do their part to give me the right documents timely so I can make it happen for them.”

An area of concern to soldiers is when they are assessed a debt. When soldiers incur a debt, they should read their LES and use their pay chain of command to resolve the issue, said 1st Lt. Valerie J. Withrow, operations officer at the reserve component pay support office at Fort McCoy.

Withrow said common debts for soldiers include unpaid insurance premiums, failure to submit certified orders after they perform active duty, prior service debts and Army and Air Force Exchange Service debts for unpaid bills.

Prior service debts will follow soldiers from active duty into the reserves. And, unpaid bills at AAFES outlets result in debts to soldiers,

Withrow said.

Madden summarized a few “Do’s” for all soldiers: “Keep all your LESs. Notify the unit pay adminis-

trator when you move, and ask someone at your unit how to read your LES if you don’t understand something on it.”

One “Don’t,” added Horning: “Never close your account for direct deposit (called SURE PAY in the Army) until your drill pay goes into the new account.”

“I learned a lot at this workshop,” said Pvt. 1st Class Tina Day, the pay administrator for F Co., 158th Aviation Regiment, New Century, Kan. “Now I can better service my troops, and I can teach them how to keep their own pay straight.” ♦

LESs are the soldier’s history and are used to resolve issues, should any arise.

formed when they move, and they need to sign the form required to change their address for their LES and W-2,” said Sgt. 1st Class Paulette Horning, pay administrator and facility manager at 706th Transportation Company, in Mansfield, Ohio.

“Most of our troops are used to the computer age, and they know and expect their drill pay to be automated and timely,” Horning said. “However, many don’t realize payment by orders and filing travel vouchers require their turning in documents to me on time so I can submit them. Some pay is still sent through the mail. Soldiers expect and deserve prompt remunera-

MOUT training

Training takes MPs to new level of readiness

Practice makes perfect. That's the conventional thinking for training scenarios and although they can never cover all of the situations you may see, the Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) site at Fort Knox, KY, is as good as it gets.

The combined units of the 342nd Military Police Company, 447th Military Police Company, and 391st Headquarters Company, spent a weekend recently training for hostile environments at "Doom City" as the MOUT site is called. The training involved medevac, forced entry, room clearing and mounted escort.

"It will help out in the long run because nothing is better than hands-on training," said Pvt. Jesse McPherson of the 342nd MP Co. "Everything is so organized and the instructors are great."

Training started with walking through the scenarios with the speed picking up each time. By the end of the weekend the training was being played out at full speed complete with pyrotechnics and hostile demonstrators.

"We had some good hostile demonstrator exercises," said Maj. Mark Arnold, commander of the 391st MP Bn. "Our troops had to deal with the hostile environments that they could face."

Arnold had the unique experience of playing two roles during the weekend. At one point,

Arnold acted as a hostile demonstrator, giving him a different view of his troops' training.

The training was a refresher for some.

"It re-emphasizes the training the we have already had," said Sgt Daniel Smith, 447th MP Co. "In case we get called to work at a civil disturbance this will help us work as a team."

Teamwork was stressed throughout the weekend in each training scenario. In room clearing

exercises teams moved through each structure, clearing it room by room while watching out for each other. At the Embassy building in the compound it was teamwork and vigilance that kept the area secure.

Vigilance includes reacting to and stopping trouble before it begins.

"This will make us better oriented as to what could happen and how to react," said Smith. "It will help us pick out disturbance leaders and get them out of the crowd before things get out of control."

With support from the UH-60As of the 57th Medical AA from Fort Bragg medevac, training was carried out with several soldiers getting a ride around the area. The helicopters were also used in snatch and grab, and extraction exercises.

The professionalism shown by instructors from the OC Team HHT 16th Calvary Regiment increases the effectiveness of the training. The reality

MOUT training continued page 14

88th Regional Support Command soldiers are lifted to safety from "Doom City" during MOUT Training at Fort Knox.



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(Above) Flaming buildings added realism to "Doom City," as 88th RSC soldiers took part in Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) Training at Fort Knox.



An 88th Regional Support Command soldier checks for danger during Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) Training at Fort Knox.



(Background) 88th Regional Support Command soldiers race for cover in "Doom City" during Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) Training at Fort Knox.

BlueDevil II